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## **PRESS RELEASE**

**For Release: Immediate**

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### **GENERATIONS UNITED TO PROVIDE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT MODEL FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS TO HELP BALTIMORE'S CHILDREN SUCCEED IN SCHOOL**

(Washington, D.C.) – Generations United of Washington, D.C., in partnership with the Center for Law and Education and the Baltimore-based Grandfamilies Parent Teacher Student Association (GPTSA), has begun a two-year initiative – Grand Partners in Education – to develop, pilot and promote a family engagement model that improves the long-term academic and social outcomes for Pre-K through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade children in Baltimore.

The project is funded by a \$500,000 grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation of Battle Creek, Mich.

“Our new partnership will engage grandparents who are raising grandchildren and provide them with the tools to be successful, powerful educational advocates for the children in their care,” said Donna Butts, executive director of Generations United. “Grandparents can and should be full partners with schools to ensure their children receive the highest quality education possible.”

“Key provisions of our country’s federal education law designed to empower family engagement and strengthen school quality are often underutilized, misunderstood or ignored,” said Paul Weckstein, co-director of the Center for Law and Education. “This project will tap the leadership potential of grandparents raising grandchildren and use these provisions to create a framework for parents and caregivers to work hand in hand with schools to ensure the best educational outcomes for children.”

The project will pilot a multigenerational approach to improving the learning outcomes of children in Baltimore by: developing a group of grandfamily leaders to advocate for students in their children’s schools; empowering families to be equal, informed partners in securing high quality education for their children; and boosting the ability of educators to work collaboratively with students’ families.

“GPTSA recognizes that, although educational challenges are large and must be met, there are a wide range of other difficult challenges these families face,” explains Annette Saunders, GPTSA founder and president. “This project aligns with GPTSA goals to help members grow personally, developing skills and advocating for a relevant cause while setting a good example for children and the community.”

The Grand Partners in Education project will result in a model approach for developing and implementing a family-school engagement policy and a school program quality plan; a tool kit, training materials and other resource materials designed to help engage grandparent caregivers as leaders in developing and implementing a strong family engagement plan; a final report summarizing evaluation results of key project outcomes, lessons learned and tips for replication. The initiative will also include a communications strategy designed to shift the local and national discourse around family engagement to highlight the powerful role of enlisting families as full and equal partners in making sure schools have the key components of high quality education in place.

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*For nearly three decades, Generations United has been the catalyst for policies and practices stimulating cooperation and collaboration among generations, evoking the vibrancy, energy and sheer productivity that result when people of all ages come together. We believe that we can only be successful in the face of our complex future if generational diversity is regarded as a national asset and fully leveraged. [www.gu.org](http://www.gu.org)*

**About The Center for Law and Education (CLE)**

*With the mission of making the right of every child to high-quality education a reality, particularly those living in poverty, CLE has worked for over forty years to develop and effectively implement policies that advance that right and embody principles of quality, equity, and empowered family engagement – including the federal Title I policies addressed by this project . [www.cleweb.org](http://www.cleweb.org)*

**About Grandparent Parent Teacher Student Association (GPTSA)**

*As an affiliate of the Maryland PTA and the National PTA, the largest volunteer child advocacy group in the nation, GPTSA has an obligation to children and our society to provide families with a powerful voice to speak on behalf of the well being of all children by providing the tools and exchange of knowledge for parents/grandparents and teachers to help all children succeed in school and ...in life. Under the leadership of Annette Saunders, Grandfamily Matters LLC, GPTSA links its members from across the city, providing necessary services and supports that enable members to get connected, with opportunities to meet and network with other parents, teachers and school administrators.*

**About the W.K. Kellogg Foundation**

*The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), founded in 1930 as an independent, private foundation by breakfast cereal pioneer, Will Keith Kellogg, is among the largest philanthropic foundations in the United States. Guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive, WKKF works with communities to create conditions for vulnerable children so they can realize their full potential in school, work and life.*

*The Kellogg Foundation is based in Battle Creek, Mich., and works throughout the United States and internationally, as well as with sovereign tribes. Special emphasis is paid to priority places where there are high concentrations of poverty and where children face significant barriers to success. WKKF priority places in the U.S. are in Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico and New Orleans; and internationally, are in Mexico and Haiti. For more information, visit [www.wkkf.org](http://www.wkkf.org).*